

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the thorough examination of the present application that is reflected in the Final Official Action of December 17, 2002. Applicant also appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 7-11 and 21-26 have been allowed. To expedite the prosecution of this application, claims 12-14 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Cancellation of claims 12-14 should not be construed as an acquiescence to the rejections set forth in the Final Office Action. Claim 1 is amended; a marked up version of the amended claim is attached hereto pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(ii). Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the language of claim 1. These amendments are not made in response to the rejections of claim 1 set forth in the Final Office Action. As will be discussed below, claim 1 would be patentable over the cited references without these amendments. It is not Applicant's intent to surrender any equivalents based on the amendments made herein.

Applicant believes the foregoing amendments comply with requirements of form and thus may be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(a) as presenting rejected claims in better form for consideration on appeal. Alternatively, to the extent any of these amendments are deemed to touch the merits, then entry is requested under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b). These amendments were not presented earlier because they are in response to the matters pointed out for the first time in the Final Office Action. Claims 1-11 and 21-26 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 was rejected as being unpatentable over Bush et al. (USPN 6,380,554) in view of Fulford, Jr. et al. (USPN 5,916,715).

Claim 1 has been amended, and the amendments to claim 1 are supported throughout the description and drawings, for example, by FIGS. 3-5, 11, 13 and 15 of the present application. Applicant respectfully submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited references for at least the following reasons.

In rejecting claim 1, the Final Official Action concedes that "Bush does not disclose the contact section formed in an interlayer dielectric layer." Applicant agrees that Bush does not suggest this recitation of claim 1. Moreover, Applicant also submits that the cited references also fail to teach or suggest numerous other recitations of claim 1.

For example, claim 1 requires that the "a first wiring formed over the interlayer dielectric layer and disposed with a separation from the contact section shorter than a specified

separation." Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to teach or suggest this recitation of claim 1 since the conductive line 72a of Bush is not "disposed with a separation from the contact section" because Bush does not teach a contact section. Fulford, Jr. does not suggest disposing the conductive line 72a of Bush with a separation from the vias 10 of Fulford, Jr. Thus, the cited references fail to teach or suggest "a first wiring formed over the interlayer dielectric layer and disposed with a separation from the contact section shorter than a specified separation," as required by claim 1.

Claim 1 also requires that the "a second wiring having a connection region connected to the contact section." Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to teach or suggest this recitation of claim 1 since the overlapping areas of conductors 52, 58 and 64 (designated by dotted line 90) shown in FIG. 3 of Bush are not "connected to the contact section" because Bush does not teach a contact section. There is nothing in Fulford, Jr. that would suggest connecting the conductors 52, 58 and 64 of Bush to the vias 10 of Fulford, Jr. Thus, the cited references also fail to teach or suggest "a second wiring having a connection region connected to the contact section," as required by claim 1.

In addition, claim 1 requires that the "the second wiring has an extension section extending in a non-wiring region in the connection region." It appears that the Examiner is asserting that the portion of conductor 52 that extends in the y-direction corresponds to "an extension section." It also appears that the Examiner is asserting that the overlapping areas of conductors 52, 58 and 64 (designated by dotted line 90) corresponds to the "connection region." Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references fail to teach or suggest this recitation of claim 1 since there is no suggestion in FIG. 3 of Bush that the portion of conductor 52 that extends in the y-direction extends "in a non-wiring region" that is in the overlapping areas of conductors 52, 58 and 64 (designated by dotted line 90). Thus, the cited references also fail to teach or suggest "the second wiring has an extension section extending in a non-wiring region in the connection region," as required by claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Dependent claims 2-6 are also patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Dependent Claims 2-4

Applicant submits that dependent claims 2-4 are also separately patentable since the cited references fail to teach or suggest numerous recitations of those claims.

For example, claim 2 requires that "the separation is shorter than a specified separation and there is a minimum separation between wirings in the wiring pattern." As noted above, Bush does not teach a contact section, and Fulford, Jr. does not suggest disposing the conductive line 72a of Bush with a separation from the vias 10 of Fulford, Jr. Accordingly, the cited references fail to teach or suggest that a first wiring is "disposed with a separation from the contact section," much less that "the separation is shorter than a specified separation and there is a minimum separation between wirings in the wiring pattern," as required by claim 2.

Applicant also submits that the cited references fail to teach or suggest that "the connection region ... having dimensions that are greater than or equal to dimensions of the contact section," as required by claim 3. There is nothing shown in FIG. 3 of Bush suggesting that the overlapping areas of conductors 52, 58 and 64 (designated by dotted line 90) would have dimensions that are greater than or equal to "dimensions of the contact section."

Accordingly, claims 2 and 3 are separately patentable over the cited references.

The art made of record but not relied upon by the Examiner has been considered. However, it is submitted that this art neither describes nor suggests the presently claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6700 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version with markings to show changes made:

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A semiconductor device having a wiring pattern that is formed by etching a conductive layer using a resist pattern as a mask, the semiconductor device comprising:
 - a contact section formed in an interlayer dielectric layer;
 - a first wiring formed over the interlayer dielectric layer and disposed with a separation from the contact section shorter than a specified separation; and
 - a second wiring having a connection region [to be] connected to the contact section, wherein the second wiring has an extension section extending in a non-wiring region in the connection region [to be] connected to the contact section, and
 - the extension section [is disposed in] extends from at least one section of the connection region other than sides [thereof] of the connections region facing the first wiring.